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United States Department of State

Assistant Secretary of State
for African Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20520-3430

Dear Mr. Hackett:

Catholic Relief Services has played an important role in the refugee crisis in Central Africa. We have a very high regard for the outstanding humanitarian assistance which your organization has been providing. We also appreciate the thoughts contained in your August 1 letter.

Secretary Christopher has asked me to respond to that letter, which raises a number of important issues. First, as you know, U.S. military personnel are present in Kigali, Rwanda; Goma, Zaire; and in other locations in the region to participate in the relief effort. We are supporting the international organizations responsible for the relief effort. Our deployment in Kigali is limited to logistical support at the airport, and we have no plans at this time to deploy U.S. troops to other points in Rwanda.

We believe that United Nations peacekeepers are best suited to the role of helping ensure security for returning refugees. We are facilitating the deployment of the peacekeeping force and are in communication with several actual and potential African contributors. We are also supplying equipment and transporting personnel and materiel for the U.N.

We are working with the United Nations, the Government of Rwanda, and other concerned governments to ensure that refugees are not intimidated or harassed as they return to their homes, and to make certain that those responsible for genocide are brought to justice.

Finally, I want to assure you that we are consulting with appropriate governments and international organizations about countering the hate messages being broadcast by Rwandan Hutu extremists. You will be interested to know that UNHCR and others have already begun counter-programming in the region.

We look forward to continuing collaboration with Catholic Relief Services.

Sincerely yours,

George E. Moose

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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